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*Pls have
signed in
agency*

Mr. William T. Hawks
Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulation
U.S. Department of Agriculture

May 10, 2003

Dear Under Secretary Hawks,

May 10, 2003



2 sides

I am a concerned consumer writing to urge with simple, effective guidelines for the country of origin labeling program, such recommended by the Americans for Country of Origin Labeling coalition. Consumers deserve more information about the food we feed to our families, and where it was produced. This seems even more urgent now, as food safety and disease outbreaks have occurred with disturbing regularity around the world in recent years. Without country of origin labeling, I cannot make an informed decision about what I am buying, and I cannot use my purchasing power to support domestic farmers and producers. I understand that there is much controversy about how to implement mandatory country of origin labeling, and I urge you to keep several points in mind as you develop the rules. Retailers and packers have already signaled their intent to put a greater burden on suppliers than is required by the Farm Bill. For example, some packers are demanding that producers obtain a third-party certification of origin. This is unnecessary and